

truly rely on Syrian rebels to lay the targets for our elite air assets?

There are boots on the ground today. We can call them military advisers, but the fact is the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff yesterday said, if necessary, he would recommend putting them in a combat role. We are not having that debate here on the floor of the House.

The American people deserve a President and a Congress that are honest about what we face as a Nation militarily. The doubt in this debate in this Congress has been palpable. We question the strategy, we question the trust of Syrian rebels, we question our constitutional responsibility, and yet we are prepared as a body to ignore all doubt, to ignore our uncomfortable conviction of opposition to this request simply out of a desperate hope that somehow this matter might resolve itself without the President and the Congress having a hard conversation, recognizing that we are a war weary and tired Nation faced again with an asymmetric threat from terrorists who have threatened our homeland.

We want to believe the beheadings and the audible threats of terror to our shores is not real, but we know it is. We as a Nation do not have the luxury to choose what threats confront us; we only choose our response.

So my request of my colleagues in this House is that we have a full debate on what we face as a Nation. The President has brought us this very limited request merely out of statutory convenience, not out of constitutional conviction. We should not accept that.

My request of the President is this: very respectfully, do not trample on the constitutional authority of this Congress as you reluctantly march to the drumbeat of war that you are rightfully hesitant to engage in and with an elusive strategy that leaves so many unanswered questions today.

This body should have a full debate. The American people deserve to know that the President has requested full authorization and this Congress has had an opportunity to deliberate on it. I reluctantly oppose the request today, knowing we must do so much more to confront ISIS. I ask my colleagues to do the same.

#### CONGRESS AND THE USE OF MILITARY FORCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, later today we are likely to see bipartisan support for an amendment to authorize the Secretaries of Defense and State to provide limited assistance to properly vetted factions within the Syrian opposition as part of the broader effort to "degrade, and ultimately destroy" the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant. The President specifically asked Congress to provide these authorities, and I somewhat reluctantly will agree to support it.

But I want to add a caution, that this action should not be interpreted as granting congressional authorization for the broader use of military force to combat the growing threat posed by ISIL. Quite the contrary, the amendment specifically prohibits the introduction of U.S. Armed Forces into hostilities absent such explicit authorization.

Now, the President asserts he already has the authority to confront ISIL. In his most recent notification to Congress, he cites the executive's constitutional authority "to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief . . ." While this issue has been the subject of long-simmering debate between our branches and among historians and scholars, I would modestly note that the Constitution explicitly grants to Congress, and only to Congress, the power to declare war. If there are inherent unenumerated powers in the role of Commander in Chief, most surely logic dictates there are similar inherent, unenumerated powers Congress is vested in with our role to declare war.

Let us make no mistake, we are confronting here on this issue a matter of war and peace. Yet, in the same breath we are discussing the danger, we are preparing to shutter Congress for another 7 weeks until after the election.

The President said he welcomes congressional support for this effort to show the world we are "united in confronting this danger." I am glad he welcomes congressional input, but I, for one, believe the President actually needs specific congressional authority, whether he wants it or not, for what he himself acknowledges will be a prolonged campaign to eradicate the cancer-like ISIL. Anything short of that is an abrogation of our sworn duty to defend and uphold the Constitution of the United States.

This isn't President Obama trampling on the Constitution. This is Congress, in a long 60-year history, of winking and blinking about our responsibility because we don't want to bear it. But on matters of war and peace, we either live up to our constitutional responsibility, which is quite clear, or we go on a 7-week recess.

My colleagues know there are historical cases in which congressional acquiescence has been construed to confer support or authorization where none has been given. The Gulf of Tonkin resolution is certainly a case in point. It led to a prolonged war and 55,000 U.S. deaths.

The 93rd Congress adopted the War Powers Resolution to reassert Congress' role after both Korea and Vietnam. The War Powers Resolution requires the President to consult with Congress prior to introducing American forces into hostilities.

The administration has recently argued that the aerial strikes do not constitute hostilities because they don't involve sustained fighting. But again, out of the President's own words, he

said last week this would be "a comprehensive and sustained effort." That doesn't sound like a temporary action by the Commander in Chief.

And to put an even finer point on the issue, I remind my colleagues of H. Con. Res. 105, which was adopted in July, that prohibits the President from deploying or maintaining U.S. Armed Forces in a sustained combat role in Iraq without specific statutory authorization.

I agree with the President when he said we are strongest as a Nation when the President and Congress work together. On the most important issue we ever vote on, war and peace, we must come together, and this branch must live up to its constitutional responsibility at long last.

#### FIGHTING THE ISLAMIC STATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JOLLY). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, contrary to the President's assertion last week, the Islamic State is Islamic and it is a State, or at least it has all the attributes of a State. It is precisely this combination that makes it so dangerous, a messianic and clearly stated intention to wage jihad on American soil and the resources and equipment to do so.

In response to this danger, the President proposes that the United States wage a continuing air war against the Islamic State, but to avoid any commitment of ground forces. Instead, he seeks to use vetted elements of the Free Syrian Army as the American proxy force and proposes to arm and train them for that purpose.

This raises two major concerns. First, many elements of the Free Syrian Army have a long history of collaborating with the Islamic State. Its principal mission is to destroy the Syrian Government, which though utterly despotic, is currently fighting the Islamic State. We court a very real risk that this equipment will either be turned against Syria as it fights the IS, or turned over to the IS as elements of Iraqi Security Forces recently did.

Second, committing insufficient force in any conflict is self-defeating, and air strikes alone cannot win a war. For 13 years, the brave young Americans who stepped forward to defend our country after 9/11 have found themselves hamstrung by political correctness on the battlefield, perilously commingled with hostile forces, endangered by rules of engagement that undermine their ability to defend themselves, and denied the full resources and commitment of our country.

We are in precarious times, with an administration that either cannot or will not learn from the mistakes of the past. Until we are prepared to put the full might and resources of our Nation behind a war against the Islamic State, we can at least act to contain IS advances, protect our people, and restore